GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:521
ANSWERED ON:25.04.2003
REJECTION OF US FOOD CONSIGNMENT
GUNIPATI RAMAIAH;M. JAGANNATH

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have recently rejected US food consignment of soya corn blend;

(b) if so, the details thereof along with the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the consignment has been referred to the Genetic Engineering Committee;

(d) if so, the recommendations made by the Committee;

(e) the details of Government`s policy to ensure such imports to make food for poor school children fulfils all health checks in the country?

Answer

MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY)

(a) to (e) : A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) - (e) OF THE LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO.521 FOR ANS ON 25TH APRIL 2003 REGARDING `REJECTION OF US FOOD CONSIGNMENT`

(a): Yes, Sir.

(b) - (d): The Genetic Engineering Approval Committee (GEAC), established under the Ministry of Environment and Forests, at its meetings on November 7, 2002 and March 6, 2003 considered the proposal of M/s CARE and M/s CRS to supply Corn-Soya Blend (CSB) as part of the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Programme through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). The GEAC decided not to permit this supply since there was no certification from US regulatory agencies that the consignment does not contain banned or obsolete varieties of transgenic corn.

(e): All food items imported into the country, including those meant for distribution to poor school children, are subject to domestic Laws, Rules, Orders, Regulations, technical specifications, environmental and safety norms as applicable to domestically produced goods. The GEAC evaluates the food and health safety aspects of food with GM content prior to import.